



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

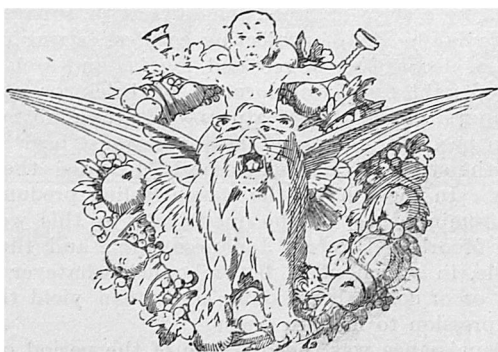
Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



MINOR ARTS OF DECORATION.

PROMINENT among the arts of embellishment applied to cabinet work are those of incising, carving and gilding. Other arts to which we shall here refer are the coating of metallic surfaces, silvering, or rather platinising, of glass for mirrors and molding of terra cotta.

Designs for incising are transferred to the surface of the wood by stencil plates or tracing them with a steel or ivory point. A leading tool employed in the cutting is a three-cornered file. Where the cutting lacks depth, as on a veneered surface, this may be partly compensated for by the width of the lines. Incising, however, may be made to exhibit the finest lines and most delicate veinings. Geometrical forms and conventionalized designs of leaves and flowers are those which predominate in this art. The Japanese style, with its many varieties and unusual shapes, and recommended by simplicity of forms and strength of purpose, has of late years been pretty freely used in this art. Incised lines may be gilded, stained or painted, according to the contrastive effect that is sought. Ordinarily curved lines are cut in the first instance very slightly, so as to admit of rectification if necessary.

As a size for gold leaf, linseed oil is heated up with gum anime and tinted with vermilion to deepen the color of the gold.

In cabinet work, above all other branches of decorative industry, carving is resorted to for the decoration of plain surfaces, as well as for pillared supports, cornices and entablatures. Although many beautiful pieces of furniture show no carving in relief, a plain surface of wood, considered in itself, is the most inartistic of all surfaces, and carving comes in appropriately to adorn it. On panels of the more massive articles of furniture this relief work is restricted to centers and corners, and this in somewhat low relief. Freedom of treatment, showing a certain "swing" in the execution, delicate touches that aid expression and effective distribution of light and shade for the graceful and forceful display of form, are the qualities demanded for good execution even of the simplest design.

If a carving has been executed with dexterous facility, this

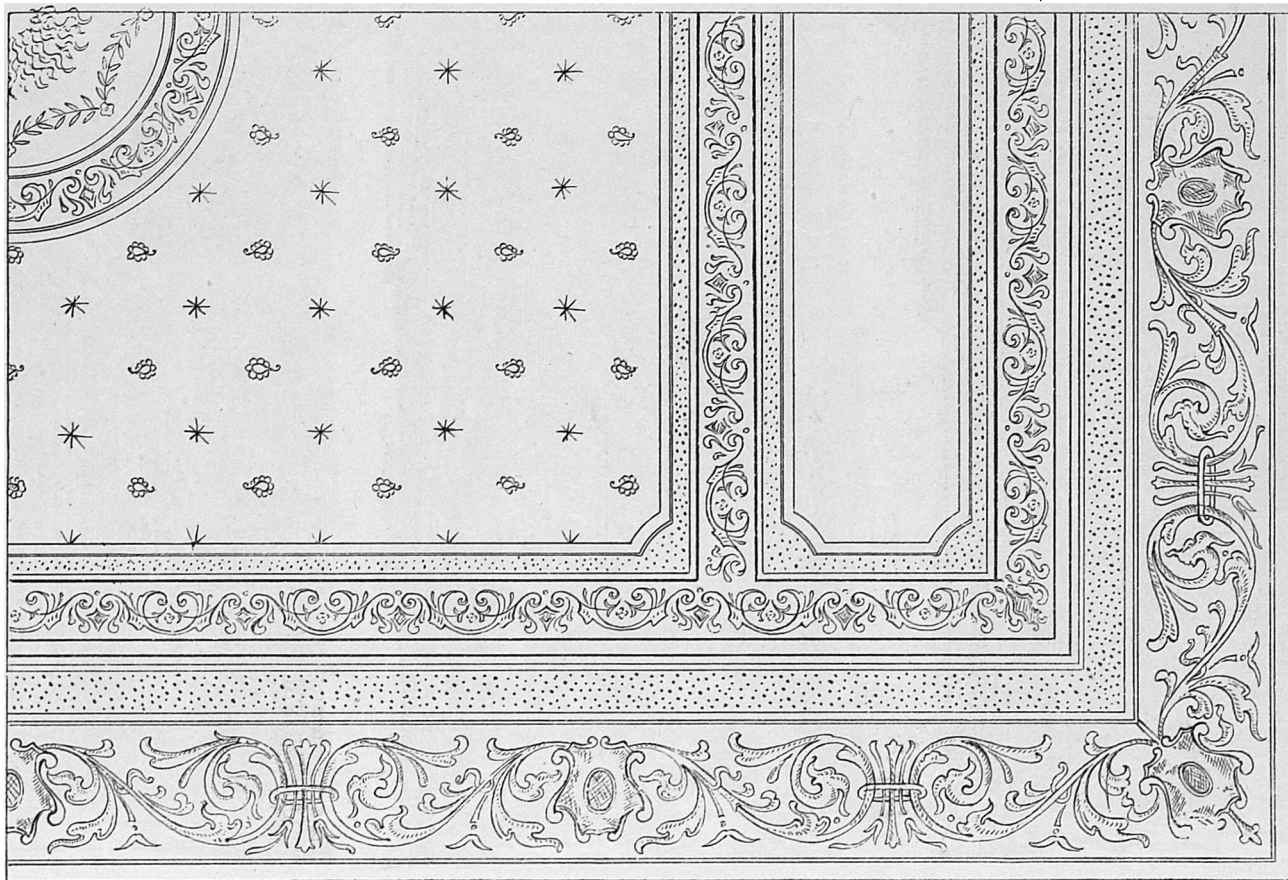
quality unfailingly stands relieved, even though roughly exerted; so with the design in the general composition, or forms, or modes in which they are arranged. Door heads, mantels, architraves and friezes afford abundant scope for bold relief, and among these may often be seen heads of surpassing excellence, such as would add to the fame of sculptors if cut in marble of life size.

Gilding, as applied to interior decoration, independently of its own beauty, softens and mellows adjacent colors, and the more solid and vivid these are the more serviceable is its presence. This is especially seen in the gilded frames of oil paintings, but other objects are influenced very decisively. Even the coating of small articles of furniture, as bamboo and rattan, card and work tables, is at times very effective on general surroundings. The surface to which gold oil size is applied, if absorbent, should receive coatings of linseed oil and whiting. For gilding carved wood, from six to ten coatings of glue, mixed with a composition size and whiting, each coating being wetted when dry and smoothed with pumice stone, are employed. The gilding of metal and their alloys is effected by the assistance of mercury, with which the gold is amalgamated for this purpose. On heat being applied the mercury is evaporated and the gold is fixed. The burnishing is done with wolves or dogs' teeth or agate.

The imparting of a fine polish or finish to handsome natural woods is of the first importance in cabinet work, and the securing such a finish involves more detailed work than is ordinarily supposed. Thus it is a general practice to give the wood two coats of lard oil rubbed down smooth; two coats of shellac, each sandpapered, three coats of shellac followed by rubbing with lard oil, and then additional coats of shellac. Carver's polish for standards, pillars, claws, etc., is composed of a pint of spirits of wine dissolved in two ounces of seedlac and two ounces of white resin, applied warm.

The true French polish is one pint of spirits of wine added to a quarter of an ounce of gum copal, the same of gum arabic and one ounce of shellac. This polish is used for plain wood that has been stained in imitation of natural wood. The principle of action is the floating with oil the gummy or resinous substances into the pores, and bringing the polish up by rubbing. The simplest varnish is a solution of shellac dissolved in naphtha.

Fluid metallic solutions largely figure in the coloration of ornamental metal surfaces, whether for purposes of shading, altering the tint, or covering an inferior metal or a common alloy with gold and silver. Ordinarily heat plays a prominent part in the fixing of these metallic hues, many of which are rendered almost as imperishable as the material to which they are attached. The colors, in fact, interpenetrate in a manner. We may instance the means of producing chocolate bronze effects on chandeliers and hardware fittings. White lead ground in varnish is thinned with turpentine and tinted with a mixture of Spanish brown, Venetian red and vegetable black, the red pre-

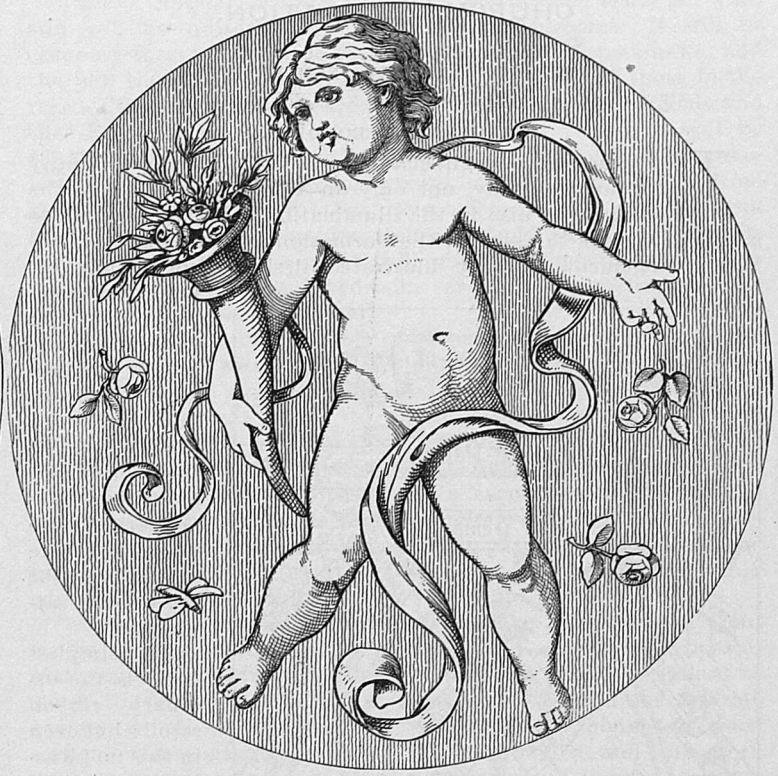


CEILING DECORATION, DESIGNED BY C. STUART DAVISON

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



SPRING.



SUMMER.

dominating if a bright chocolate is required, or the black if a deep dull tint is wanted. When hard and dry the surface is given a coat of gold size and then of copal varnish.

The art of silvering mirrors has been greatly improved of late years. The process of placing a sheet of tin covered with liquid silver on the surface of the glass, and pressing and straining it, has been abandoned, as also the use of mercury. Silvering is effected by silver solutions, also by platinum solutions, the processes being based on the discovery of Liebig, that aldehyde (produced by a partial oxydation of alcohol), will when treated with nitrate of silver, cover the glass with a brilliant metallic coating.

Terra cotta figure work, now so extensively introduced in mural decorations, mantels, etc., as well as in statuary and for exterior architectural decoration, is when of any great complexity mounted in a number of parts of varying size. The clay itself is pressed into the mold with the hand or sponge, care being taken to fill all the cavities. The different parts are afterwards united with "slip," and sent into the drying room, from which they pass to the furnace. The shrinking of the clay in drying and baking presents certain difficulties in molding. After drying the different parts are taken up to ascertain the degree of shrinkage and the closeness of the fit.

The following is a reliable recipe for the coating with metallic powder of articles of papier maché, plaster of Paris, clay, slate, hardened cement, metal, etc. It is prepared by two processes, which complete each other. No. 1, sixty parts powdered colophony, fifteen parts of alcohol, spirit of wine or pyroxylic spirit, ten parts each of turpentine and petroleum spirit, five parts silicate of soda; total, one hundred parts. The liquid, which attaches itself firmly and is applied with size, is waterproof. Before the composition has hardened dust of any desired metal is laid on it with a camelshair brush. The article is then dried in warm air. To protect this the following varnish is prepared: One part of chromate of potash is dissolved in five parts of water and then mixed with eighty parts of distilled water, fifteen parts of Russian glue, five parts of chromate of sodium and water, or of preparation No. 1; total five hundred parts.

For a very handsome and inexpensive cabinet have a carpenter make the frame of ordinary pine, give it a coating of enamel paint then varnish with clear varnish, before this is dry place on the panels small dried ferns tastefully arranged. When dry paint the ferns very carefully with gold paint. The result will resemble a Japanese cabinet to a limited extent.



AUTUMN.



WINTER.

DESIGNS FOR PANELS OF THE SEASONS, FROM THE GERMAN.